



News

RSPA 10-03
Monday, September 8, 2003

Contacts: Joe Delcambre
Damon A. Hill
Tel.: (202) 366-4831

Transportation Department Awards \$1.9 Million for Pipeline Safety Research

U.S. Transportation Secretary Norman Y. Mineta today announced transaction agreements totaling \$1.9 million for eight government-industry research and development (R&D) projects to ensure the safety and reliability of pipelines.

The awards, offered through the U.S. Department of Transportation's (DOT) Research and Special Programs Administration (RSPA), promote construction safety of new and existing pipelines, as well as support in-service pipeline repairs and detection and deterrence of leading pipeline failure causes. Matching funds were provided by industry to make approximately \$4.4 million available for research projects, bringing the agency's total government-industry investment in pipeline R&D to \$10.3 million since its pipeline safety research program began last year.

"These awards support the department's goal of sustaining a safe, secure and reliable transportation system that contributes to America's economic growth and improves our quality of life," Secretary Mineta said. "Exploiting the results of our transportation R&D investments contributes to maintaining a first-class transportation system for the American public."

Today's awards will be allocated among companies selected by RSPA that submitted research projects in response to the agency's third Broad Agency Announcement (BAA) issued in January 2003. In this BAA, RSPA solicited pipeline technologies that will help to improve pipeline materials and extend the integrity and lifetime of installed pipelines and their various components.

The Pipeline Safety Improvement Act of 2002 requires DOT to work with the Department of Energy and the National Institute for Standards and Technology in carrying out a pipeline research, development, demonstration and standardization program that will enhance pipeline transportation safety in three to five years.

In July, RSPA awarded a total of \$540,000 for research focused on new technologies to enhance pipeline operations, controls and monitoring solutions. To date, the agency has awarded funding for approximately 22 research projects with over \$5.6 million in funding being provided by industry.

RSPA has developed an R&D website that contains information on all current and previous research conducted by its Office of Pipeline Safety and provides a method for feedback and comments. <http://primis.rspa.dot.gov/rd/>.

The awards announced today will fund the following projects:

- Engineering Mechanics Corporation of Columbus, Ohio, and Pipeline Research Council International, Inc., Washington, DC, to develop improved technology used in detecting soil backfills around pipelines (\$263,976). An additional project to update, and develop where needed, alternative defect acceptance criteria for U.S. pipeline constructions (\$312,309).
- Edison Welding Institute of Columbus, Ohio, with Pipeline Research Council International, Inc., Washington, DC, and TransCanada of Alberta, Canada, to develop advanced welding repair and remediation methods for in-service pipelines (\$409,673).
- Edison Welding Institute of Columbus, Ohio, with Pipeline Research Council International, Inc., Washington, DC, TransCanada of Alberta, Canada, and ConocoPhillips of Houston to define and develop improved multi-probe automated ultrasonic testing and phased array systems to detect, locate and size flaws within pipelines and resolve distance between potentially interacting defects (\$349,900).
- BMT Fleet Technology, Limited of Ontario, Canada, to support development and application of procedures for welding on in-service pipelines using alternate welding processes (\$90,000). An additional project to support development of a guidance note for fillet welded connections to pipelines (\$45,000).
- Battelle Corporation of Columbus, Ohio, and Pipeline Research Council International, Inc., Washington, DC, to develop quantitative measures to assess corrosion defect severity and determine failure pressure of pipelines (\$196,000).
- Southwest Research Institute of San Antonio, Texas, with Pipeline Research Council International, Inc., Washington, DC, SoCal Gas of Los Angeles and Gulf South Pipeline of San Antonio, Texas, to produce technology capable of exerting a high-amplitude guided wave to allow long-range pipeline inspection for enhanced pipeline safety (\$272,420).

RSPA has responsibilities for the safe and secure movement of hazardous materials to industry and consumers by all transportation modes, including the nation's pipelines; rapid response to emergencies by government agencies; training for transportation safety professionals; and applying science and technology to meet national transportation needs.

For additional information visit us on the web at: <http://primis.rspa.dot.gov/rd>; or contact Gordon.Delcambre@rspa.dot.gov or Damon.Hill@rspa.dot.gov.